

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

1. The previous attachment discussed the importance of assessing individuals in terms of the knowledges and abilities required for maximum effectiveness in a particular managerial position. The purpose of this attachment is to carry this process to its logical conclusion--a periodically prepared schedule of developmental experiences including both work assignments and formal training; i.e., an Individual Development Plan (IDP). IDP's must be designed to meet specific developmental objectives determined jointly by the individual and the supervisor and which are needed to improve current performance and/or to prepare the individual for positions of greater responsibility. The individual development planning process provides a rational and systematic framework for meeting developmental needs in terms of the knowledges and abilities required for a position, the organization's managerial manpower needs, and the individual's career development goals. The Commission publication Suggestions for Individual Development Planning (EMMTAP No. 2, October 1973), outlines the basic principles of this process and describes the role of each participant.
2. Although IDP's may eventually be required for all Federal managers, at this time they are especially needed for newly selected managers and current managers selected for another managerial position. Carefully planned and scheduled developmental experiences are essential for filling in gaps in experience, sharpening managerial skills, acquiring a deeper understanding of internal and external environmental factors, and keeping pace with new developments in technical or program areas.
3. Developmental experiences should also be planned to prepare an individual for higher level responsibilities, but this type of long range development is normally not appropriate for newly appointed managers during the first year if it requires extended periods of time off the job. Thus the development of new managers should focus on the acquisition or sharpening of specific knowledges and skills needed immediately for maximum effectiveness in the newly occupied position.